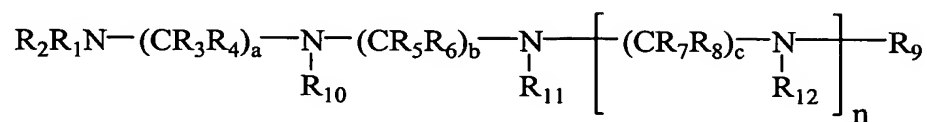


What is Claimed:

1. A method of treating or preventing pancreatitis comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a compound of formula (I):



wherein:

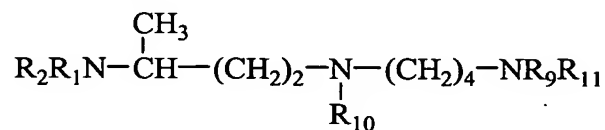
each of a, b and c is an integer from 2 to about 6;

n is an integer 0 or 1; and

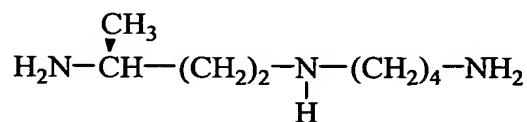
each of R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆, R₇, R₈, R₉, R₁₀, R₁₁ and R₁₂ are, independently, hydrogen or alkyl of 1 to about 6 carbons;

with the proviso that when n is 0, at least one of R₃, R₄, R₅, and R₆ is alkyl of 1 to about 6 carbons, and when n is 1, at least one of R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆, R₇ and R₈ is alkyl of 1 to about 6 carbons.

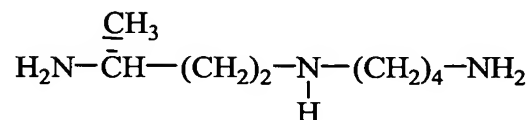
2. A method according to Claim 1 wherein a is 3, b is 4, and n is 0.
3. A method according to Claim 2 wherein each of R₃, R₄, R₅, and R₆ is, independently, hydrogen or methyl.
4. A method according to Claim 3 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula



5. A method according to Claim 4 wherein each of R₁, R₂, R₉, R₁₀ and R₁₁ is hydrogen.
6. A method according to Claim 5 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula



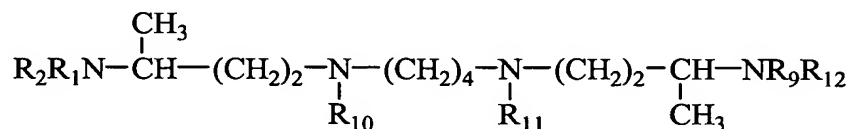
7. A method according to Claim 5 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula



8. A method according to Claim 1 wherein a is 3, b is 4, c is 3, and n is 1.

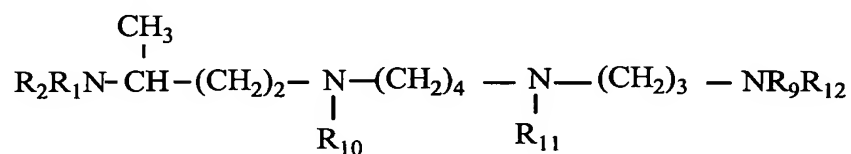
9. A method according to Claim 8 wherein each of R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆, R₇, and R₈ is, independently, hydrogen or methyl.

10. A method according to Claim 9 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula



11. A method according to Claim 10 wherein each of R₁, R₂, R₉, R₁₀, R₁₁ and R₁₂ is hydrogen.

12. A method according to Claim 9 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula

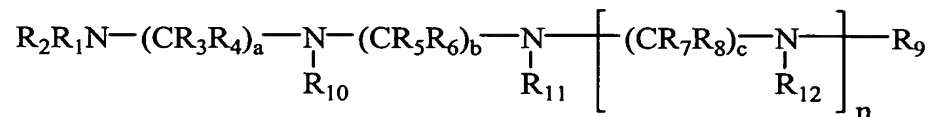


13. A method according to Claim 12 wherein each of R₁, R₂, R₉, R₁₀, R₁₁ and R₁₂ is hydrogen.

14. A method of treating or preventing pancreatitis comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a metabolically stable analogue of spermine.

15. A method of treating or preventing pancreatitis comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a metabolically stable analogue of spermidine.

16. A method of inducing liver regeneration comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a compound of formula (I):



wherein:

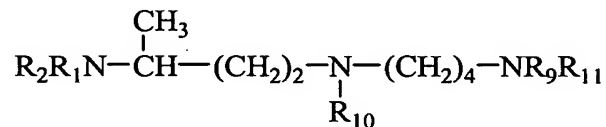
each of a, b and c is an integer from 2 to about 6;

n is an integer 0 or 1; and

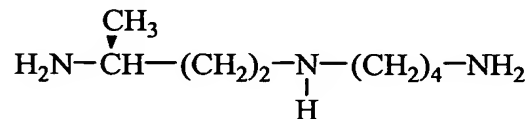
each of R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , R_5 , R_6 , R_7 , R_8 , R_9 , R_{10} , R_{11} and R_{12} are, independently, hydrogen or alkyl of 1 to about 6 carbons;

with the proviso that when n is 0, at least one of R_3 , R_4 , R_5 , and R_6 is alkyl of 1 to about 6 carbons, and when n is 1, at least one of R_3 , R_4 , R_5 , R_6 , R_7 and R_8 is alkyl of 1 to about 6 carbons.

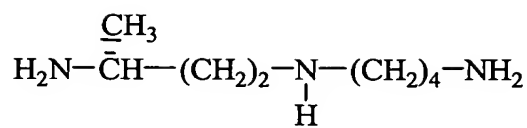
17. A method according to Claim 16 wherein a is 3, b is 4, and n is 0.
18. A method according to Claim 17 wherein each of R_3 , R_4 , R_5 , and R_6 is, independently, hydrogen or methyl.
19. A method according to Claim 18 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula



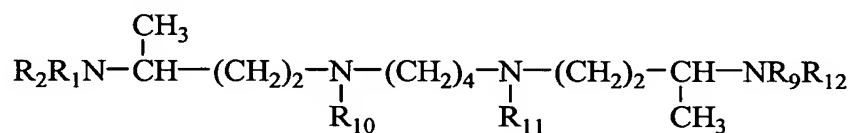
20. A method according to Claim 19 wherein each of R_1 , R_2 , R_9 , R_{10} and R_{11} is hydrogen.
21. A method according to Claim 20 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula



22. A method according to Claim 20 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula



23. A method according to Claim 16 wherein a is 3, b is 4, c is 3, and n is 1.
24. A method according to Claim 23 wherein each of R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆, R₇, and R₈ is, independently, hydrogen or methyl.
25. A method according to Claim 24 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula



26. A method according to Claim 25 wherein each of R₁, R₂, R₉, R₁₀, R₁₁ and R₁₂ is hydrogen.
27. A method according to Claim 24 wherein the compound of formula I has the formula
- $$\text{R}_2\text{R}_1\text{N}-\overset{\text{CH}_3}{\text{CH}}-(\text{CH}_2)_2-\underset{\text{R}_{10}}{\text{N}}-(\text{CH}_2)_4-\underset{\text{R}_{11}}{\text{N}}-(\text{CH}_2)_3-\text{NR}_9\text{R}_{12}$$
28. A method according to Claim 27 wherein each of R₁, R₂, R₉, R₁₀, R₁₁ and R₁₂ is hydrogen.
29. A method of inducing liver regeneration comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a metabolically stable analogue of spermine.
30. A method of inducing liver regeneration comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a metabolically stable analogue of spermidine.